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# Review of *The James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection: Selected Works* edited by Mark Andrew White

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*The James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection: Selected Works.* Edited by Mark Andrew White. Foreword by David L. Boren. Introduction by Mary Jo Watson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012. xi + 223 pp. Illustrations, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

Beginning in the 1950s, Arizona collector James T. Bialac assembled an extensive and eclectic collection of Native American art, consisting of approximately 2,500 paintings and 1,500 kachina dolls, baskets, jewelry, pottery, and sculptures. The collection represents several regions, with particular strengths in the southwestern and southeastern United States and the Southern Plains. Produced by the University of Oklahoma in recognition of Bialac's donation of his collection to the university's Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, the catalogue provides an overview of this assemblage, featuring images of selected works and accompanying essays.

Following Mary Jo Watson's introduction, "A Tradition of Appreciation: Native American Art at the University of Oklahoma," the catalogue consists of six essays primarily written by Oklahoma-based writers: "James T. Bialac: A Lasting Legacy" by Christy Vezolles; "James T. Bialac and the Patronage of American Indian Art" by Mark Andrew White; "Native American Painting: Schools, Styles, and Movements" by Edwin L. Wade and Rennard Strickland; "Making Modern: Selected Paintings, Drawings, and Prints" by W. Jackson Rushing III; "Kachina Dolls: Tradition and Innovation" by Mark Andrew White; and "Outside the Frame: Three-Dimensional Art" by Christina E. Burke.

The essays detail James Bialac's collecting interests and the ways in which he built his collection over a period of more than fifty years. Although he primarily focused his efforts on contemporary Native art, the collection includes a few ledger drawings produced in the 1880s by Northern Cheyenne and Navajo artists. Readers with interests in the Great Plains may particularly appreciate the paintings by Southern Cheyenne artist Dick West; Kiowa Five artists Stephen Mopope, James Auchiah, and Monroe Tsatoke; Oklahoma artists Acee Blue Eagle, Woody Crumbo, Carl Sweezy, and T. C. Cannon; and Paul Goodbear from the Northern Cheyennes. They may also be interested in Mary Jo Watson's introductory description of the unique history of the University of Oklahoma's involvement with Native American artists—particularly the Kiowa Five—beginning in the 1920s under the leadership of Oscar B. Jacobson. Rushing's essay provides valuable historical and cultural contexts for specific works as well as insights into the backgrounds and motivations of particular artists.

The catalogue features spectacular color photographs of each work and an attractive design that features many full-page images. Additional publications on the Bialac collection would benefit from further discussion of the historical, cultural, and personal contexts for specific works, along with contributions by Native American artists and writers who could provide, perhaps, different perspectives on this significant art collection.

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